

PARTY CELEBRATES RESTORATION

A street party today will celebrate the restoration of the beautiful 'starburst' street lights that have become a Kings Cross landmark.

STARBURST LIGHTS REJUVENATED

The 11 giant coloured 'medallions' that hover above Lankelly Place now have new weatherproof light fittings and energy-efficient LED bulbs.

ILLUMINATING ENTERTAINMENT

Lord Mayor Clover Moore will join the lights' original artist, Peter McGregor, to switch on the lights, and performers will entertain.

DARLINGHURST



Skater Brett Chan and RJ Williams at Darlinghurst's new World Famous Westsyde.

Picture: JOHN APPELYARD

CREATIVE NEW HUB FOR SKATERS

SKATERS have a new hub in Darlinghurst thanks to the City of Sydney's creative spaces program.

Formerly based in the inner west, World Famous Westsyde has just set up shop on Oxford St, where it now runs a community radio station, holds street art workshops with local graffiti artists, organises school holiday programs for disadvantaged children, and sells skating gear.

To make the most of the new space, the Oxford St shopfront also includes a custom-built indoor half

pipe. Westsyde's managing director RJ Williams said the new space had changed the dynamic of the store.

"We were based in Dulwich Hill, which was fine, but we were next to a tool shop and funeral home so we never really had the dynamic we had hoped for," he said.

"Being here has already given us better access to our market. The space is awesome and we are surrounded by other creative space."

Williams said that he hoped Westsyde became a hub for like-

minded individuals to congregate and socialise. "When you buy something in most stores you pay for the goods and you leave," he said.

"Here, 90 per cent of our customers come in and hang out for an hour or two, which brings back that old-school skate shop vibe that doesn't exist anymore. Because of the size of this place we have been able to set up our skate ramp which has become a real feature."

James Gorman

KINGS CROSS

TREE GROWS IN HONOUR OF THE LOST

James Gorman

A SPECIAL tree-planting in Kings Cross on Monday will commemorate Australian lives lost to drug abuse.

A 4.5m native hoop pine will be planted in Lawrence Hargrave Reserve.

Founder of Family Drug Support, Tony Trimmingham, who lost his own son to drugs, said the commemoration will honour the untold numbers who have died because of drugs.

"We have been conducting remembrance services for the last 16 years and we have been able to plant trees in locations like Brisbane and Byron Bay, however we couldn't get one in Sydney due to council regulations, until now," he said.

"So this tree is to remember all the people who have died from illicit drugs because it has a terrible effect on the families and the people close to them. There is a real stigma when it comes to people who have lost their lives this way but we remember the good things and the positive qualities."

Mr Trimmingham said while he has learnt to accept the death of his son Damien he is still haunted by the two words "what if".

"My son died in 1997 from a heroin



Special planting: Tony Trimmingham.

overdose in Surry Hills when he was 23 and in the early days after it happened the pain was excruciating.

"I still think about what might've happened— would he have married, would he have had children? These are the things you miss out on."

Mr Trimmingham said he would like to see changes made to the current laws on drugs in Australia.

"Perhaps a different approach to drugs is in order: decriminalisation and regulation of certain drugs, less punitive laws and more education about the dangers of drug use."

■ A memorial service will be held at Ashfield Uniting Church on Saturday at 6pm for people who would like to light a candle in memory of those lost to drugs.



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